

I am increasingly uncomfortable with the irresponsibility of our corporate-owned media. The ever-increasing power of a few companies to control which information the public receives invites abuse and unethical political manipulation. Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. It is a disservice to our democracy, and should not be condoned by the public or the FCC.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. These corporate-owned media outlets need to be critically examined in terms of their actual impact on the public--are they truly serving us? If not, they should not be granted a license until they do. Thank you.